



ANGRY PARENTING

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Anger often begets anger. It seldom poses a great outcome and is almost always the gateway to bitterness and violence. There's no telling how the eruption of anger will eventually give birth to undesirable results.

Hitting a child in anger is never a sensible way to discipline a recalcitrant child. Doing so hurts, and the damage done is always irreparable. Harm is brought to the child in more than physical ways. Children do not respond well to angry outbursts and angry hitting. They end up scarred for life, not only physically but most importantly, in the emotional aspect. In the end, the child remembers the anger but not the reason for it, much less the lesson to be learned.

As a parent to seven kids, I have not always had smooth sailing at raising my children. There have been times when I have succeeded at certain points of discipline. Unfortunately, to my own point of view, I believe I have failed countless times during my journey of parenthood. Inculcating desired values is never an easy romp in the park, and I admittedly have fallen prey to the harassed type of parenting that so often afflicts modern-day parents. Indeed, in our hurry to teach our children to grow up, we are guilty of teaching them how not to grow up. But this is in a less comprehensible manner, though, and all because of anger.

How many times have you sat alone and contemplated on the day just passed? How many times have you found yourself lacking in many respects as a parent, all because you failed to hold your temper in check? Temper is always the one thing you can not have by losing it. When we have a temper, it only means we lose it very easily. That was one of the greatest ironies espoused by the film "Anger Management", a rather hilarious movie that showed the extent to which anger can explode. I rather thought the main character there was very cool compared to me. I am just lucky, I guess, for having kids that are able to stay cool when I no longer have the sanity to hold my temper. In the complete absence of my husband, my children have learned to read the warning signs: flaring nostrils; raised voice; enlargement of the eye openings; clenched fists; arms on hips. All in me, folks, not in them. The older ones have become wise enough to avoid direct confrontations at that point or to prod their younger siblings to action.

Anger does not serve anyone any better. Parenthood requires an infinite reservoir of patience. Before going to sleep on any given night, never end the day with anger still in the air between your child and you. Clear the air and help your child wake up to a better day tomorrow. You will never regret that!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why is succumbing to anger not a good way of disciplining your child?
2. How does anger hurt a child in more profound ways?
3. How do you usually curb your temper?
4. What is the best way to discipline a child who is misbehaving?
5. Read about Amy Chua's book, "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother". Why do you think the book has received numerous conflicting opinions? Share your own opinions/ideas on this.